Inclusion and exclusion: Global challenges within deaf education

Authors:
Jessica A. Scott
Georgia State University, U.S.A.
Hannah Dostal
University of Connecticut, U.S.A.
Tisha Ewen-Smith
Jamaica Association of the Deaf, Jamaica

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the authors explore the practice of inclusion as it relates to the education of deaf and hard of hearing (d/hh) students. Using the current situation in Jamaica as a microcosm, it is argued that for this specific population of students, it may be necessary to reframe and redefine the notion of inclusion more broadly. For example, the authors argue that as a result of the specific cultural, linguistic, and academic needs of d/hh students, a more traditional approach to inclusion may in fact result in isolation and less access to content and skills. Inclusion that considers how deaf education classrooms may include accessible language, the Deaf community, families of d/hh children, and Deaf role models may be more appropriate for this population.

Keywords: Jamaica Association for the Deaf, Ministry of Education, Deaf Community, Teachers of the Deaf, Educational Interpreters, Partnership for Literacy Enhancement of the Deaf, Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf, Deaf Learners, Deaf Culture, Mainstream Education

INTRODUCTION

Though inclusive education is increasingly the preferred model for special education in many developed countries, the education of d/hh children presents unique challenges for the inclusive approach. The literal definition of inclusive education is the incorporation of students with disabilities into the general education setting with appropriate accommodations, though the intentions of inclusivity is not limited to the physical addition of children with disabilities to the classroom (see Komesaroff & McLean, 2006, for a discussion of the inadequacies of inclusion for d/hh students that do not account for linguistic, cultural, and social needs), but rather meaningfully including children both academically and socially in the classroom environment. Research has shown positive outcomes in many instances for both students with disabilities and those without as the result of inclusive approaches to education (Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Peterson & Hitftie, 2010).

As a result of the changes in instructional service delivery and educational placement, many students with a hearing loss are more frequently integrated into general education school learning communities, taught the same curriculum as their hearing peers by general education teachers, and receive special education services from an itinerant teacher. This is in contrast to going to a resource room, being placed in a self-contained deaf education classroom, or attending a special school for students who are deaf[1] (Anderson & Arnoldi, 2011; Antia, Jones, Reed, & Kreimeyer, 2009; Antia, Kreimeyer, & Reed, 2010; Bullard, 2003; Foster & Cue, 2009; Hyde & Power, 2003; Luckner, 2010; Reed, Antia, & Kreimeyer, 2008). Similar changes in service delivery options for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (d/hh) have occurred in Canada

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[1] In this chapter, we use the term deaf or d/hh to refer to all individuals with a hearing loss regardless of cultural affiliation. We use the term Deaf to refer specifically to individuals are are engaged in the Deaf community and consider themselves culturally Deaf.

(Akamatsu, Mayer, & Hardy-Braz, 2008), the United Kingdom (Powers, 2008), and Australia (Power & Leigh, 2011). As explained by Miller (2008), “the itinerant model [of deaf education] is the predominant model nationally, even internationally” (p. 211). However, d/hh students may not have the same positive experiences in inclusive settings compared to their hearing peers with disabilities.

The inclusive education of d/hh students in general education settings is complex because it often requires students to work across differences in language, culture, and disability. D/hh children who are placed into a general education environment may find themselves the only d/hh child in the class with no peers who know how to successfully communicate with them. This may be especially true for d/hh children who communicate primarily using a sign language. First, there is the difficulty of locating skilled interpreters who understand the content areas for which they are interpreting, which is especially important in classes conveying advanced content. In addition, there is also the social and academic impact on communication in the classroom between the d/hh child and his or her peers and teacher, when neither the teacher nor classroom peers know sign language and the interpreter may have insufficient skills to ensure clear and consistent communication between all parties (Schick, Williams, & Kupermintz, 2005). Without a direct line of communication between the child and her teachers and peers, misunderstandings and complications may arise.

Issues of language and culture may be the most salient, but they are certainly not the only barriers to providing a meaningful inclusive educational experience for d/hh children. From an international perspective, some cultures have entrenched beliefs about disability which may limit the social inclusion of students physically included in mainstream general education classrooms

(Danseco, 1997; UNICEF, 2013). As a result, in some cases inclusive education for d/hh children may meet the literal requirements for inclusion but not the underlying intention. In this chapter we focus on the context of deaf education within Jamaica. Jamaica in particular has a history of belief that having a child with a disability may be a punishment for sin or wrongdoing, and children born with disabilities have been hidden away from the community (Miller, 2005). Such beliefs may result in fewer available opportunities for people with disabilities, and in perceptions that teaching people with disabilities is an unattractive career option. Under-resourced countries like Jamaica by definition have less access to supplies and capital, which may pose a challenge when locating appropriate materials or adequately trained teachers of d/hh students. In this chapter, we discuss the challenges of inclusive education for d/hh students especially within Jamaica. We close with an argument for a broader conception of inclusive education that may be more aligned with the educational needs of d/hh students in such contexts.

BACKGROUND

There have been a number of difficulties identified regarding the inclusion of d/hh children in general education settings in the past. Historically, d/hh children were not included in typical schools, and only the d/hh children of the very wealthy even had the opportunity to become educated at all (Marchark, Lang, & Albertini, 2002). More recently, a number of criticisms of inclusive education originate from within the Deaf community itself, and often are centered around difficulties with socialization, and exposure to fluent sign language models and Deaf adults. For instance, d/hh adults who grew up in general education settings have historically reported feeling socially isolated compared to those who grew up in signing environments or self-contained classrooms (Drolsbaugh, 2013; Oliva, 2004). Similarly, some hard-of-hearing adolescents who were educated in inclusive settings have reported bullying from peers because of their hearing loss and difficulty with identity development (Kent, 2003). Though this is not necessarily a universal experience, the evidence indicates that simply including d/hh students in general education settings without purposeful attention to their communication needs and potential for positive peer relationships is insufficient for the spirit as well as the literal definition of inclusion to be met.

In addition, d/hh children have unique instructional needs that are frequently not adequately met in the general education classroom without a specially trained teacher of the deaf (Stinson & Antia, 1999; Luckner & Pierce, 2013) or the support of a trained sign language interpreter (Slobodzian, 2011). For instance, some d/hh children may have difficulty with full academic participation in a general education setting due to language and communication barriers that make the conveyance of academic concepts difficult (Stinson & Antia, 1999). In addition, practices of inclusion may unconsciously favor the experience of a d/hh student who uses speech over one who uses sign (Stinson, Liu, Saur & Long, 1996), which may reinforce social exclusion and stigma against using a signed language while also providing a more complete educational experience to a d/hh child who uses spoken language compared to one who uses signed language. Though there are itinerant teachers of the deaf in some countries who travel between schools where d/hh children are enrolled to provide instructional support for both the child and the general education teacher, in many parts of the world such teachers are not available.

The educational situation in Jamaica for d/hh children may in some ways serve as a microcosm representing some of the structural, educational, and cultural difficulties that exist for providing appropriate opportunities for this population, especially in under-resourced settings that may have fewer educational assets than those available in developed countries. The remainder of this chapter discusses deaf education and the challenges of inclusion through an examination of the current situation in Jamaica.

CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE DEAF EDUCATION

The Context of Jamaica

Children with disabilities are regarded as inferior in some cultures (Danseco, 1997; UNICEF, 2013) and as a developing country, Jamaica still struggles with the acceptance of such children (Miller, 2005). When these children are viewed as inferior, this may have a negative impact on the types and quality of educational services they receive (UNICEF, 2013). Perhaps due to pervasive beliefs about children with disabilities in general and d/hh children in particular, the field of deaf education in Jamaica continues to receive less than desired number and quality of persons who are highly skilled, highly trained, and passionate to become effective instructors of d/hh students. Though JAD hearing testing services identifies on average 200 children each year with a hearing loss, only 310 students are enrolled across all the schools for the deaf in the country (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2015). This statistic would indicate that a number of d/hh children are educated in what might be termed “inclusive” environments, though given the resources available in the country at-large, the likelihood that these children in general education settings are receiving an education that is appropriate and accessible is quite small. They are also unlikely to be accompanied by a qualified interpreter who might render classroom discussion into an accessible language. Unfortunately, little hard data exists to understand the exact experience of the d/hh child in a general education classroom in Jamaica. However, given what we know about the language, academic, social, and cultural needs of d/hh children, the type of resources available to teachers, and the current system for training and recruiting teachers, the authors believe that rather than assuming that inclusive education is appropriate for all children with disabilities as a “one-size-fits-all” approach to what should be individualized education, instead a re-imagining of what it means to be inclusive may yield more positive outcomes for this population. To do this, we must first understand how teachers of the deaf are trained and employed in Jamaica.

A challenge arises when schools for d/hh students seek to recruit highly trained content area experts with requisite skills such as JSL proficiency, as the pool of teachers to choose from is usually limited. This may be a combined result of a lack of training options as well as noted cultural beliefs about disabilities. In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are fewer than ten qualified interpreters in the entire nation - and of these, none were certified within Jamaica (JAD Executive Director, personal communication). This means the pool of professionals to work as interpreters and support staff and teachers in mainstream classrooms, or as specialized teachers of the deaf, are limited due to the limited training options. As an attempt to alleviate these language and communication difficulties, a number of Deaf Cultural Facilitators (DCFs) are now employed in these classrooms throughout Jamaica. DCFs are Deaf adults who assist teachers and serve as language models for both teachers and students in the Deaf Education classroom. DCFs can and do in many ways fill the gap by providing language and cultural support, both DCFs and teachers are in need of effective professional development regarding effective instruction for and a cultural orientation towards d/hh students.

There are approximately 450 d/hh students across 11 schools and units for d/hh students in Jamaica (Jamaica Association for the Deaf, 2017a), who are served by approximately 112 academic staff, 70% of which are teachers, and the remaining 30% of which are DCFs and teachers' aides (Jamaica Association for the Deaf, 2017b). Approximately 40% of the schools for the Deaf (for example, the Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf) on Jamaica are privately owned and supported by donors internationally. Approximately 50% of teachers are trained only up to Level 2 (out of a possible 4 levels) in Jamaican Sign Language (JSL), and this training is almost always received as in-service training with no long-term coaching or technical guidance (JAD Executive Director, personal communication). As a result, educators are employed, particularly at the secondary level, who do not have basic competence in JSL nor adequate knowledge of pedagogical approaches supporting deaf learners. Given this lack of preparation, teachers may be unable to effectively support d/hh students in their development of academic knowledge and skills (Partnership for Literacy Enhancement for the Deaf Project, 2017). DCFs presence in the classroom is an attempt to bridge this gap. However, it remains that there is often difficulty with communication between students and their teachers, and a lack of fluent language models who can support d/hh students as they develop into proficient signers. There may therefore ultimately be a lack of adequate access to curriculum and opportunities to learn and develop, resulting in poor educational outcomes for d/hh students.

These poor educational outcomes are evident in the assessments completed with d/hh students in Jamaica. For example, less than 10% of the d/hh student population are currently functioning at grade level according to the Mico Diagnostic Reading Test, a standardized test developed specifically for use in Jamaica (Partnership for Literacy Enhancement for the Deaf

Project, 2017). This low level of student achievement calls for a refocus on one of the Jamaica Ministry of Education’s (2012) objective to attract and retain well qualified, certified and licensed teachers to fill requirements of all educational institutions at all levels of the system by 2020 according to the National Education Strategic Plan.

It appears that how d/hh children are educated in Jamaica is strongly influenced by cultural beliefs, structural limitations, and availability of physical and human resources. This in turn may directly impact the academic achievement of d/hh children in this context. However, the authors believe that rethinking inclusivity may be a positive step forward for d/hh children being educated in Jamaica. Below, we explore two paths: The first path focuses on implementing a more traditional model of inclusion as commonly envisioned in the U.S., wherein d/hh children are taught alongside hearing peers in typical classrooms with supports and scaffolds to allow them to access an education being delivered in a language that they may not speak or understand. The second path requires a re-imagining of the idea of inclusion itself, wherein rather than a focus on the literal, physical inclusion of d/hh children in a general education setting, we set our sights on the achieving the spirit of inclusion - a setting in which d/hh children can achieve academic success and social acceptance, and which sets the stage for their continued development and success into adulthood.

The Status Quo of Inclusivity in Deaf Education

There is evidence that some d/hh children in mainstream settings experience frequent feelings of loneliness, bullying, and isolation (Drolsbaugh, 2013; Kent, 2003; Oliva, 2004). In contrast, some who are educated in more specialized residential settings or purposeful co-enrollment settings with both d/hh and hearing peers may experience more positive socialization experiences (Foster, 1989; Kreimeyer, et al., 2000). One study of life satisfaction among d/hh children in day programs and residential schools (both educational settings that include primarily or exclusively d/hh peers) found no difference in global life satisfaction between their participants and a hearing comparison group - though this study did not include a comparison group of d/hh children in inclusive settings, which is a limitation (Gilman, Easterbrooks, & Frey, 2004). Early positive social experiences may be a stepping stone toward the ability as adults to navigate both the Deaf and hearing worlds. These realities lead us to advocate for rethinking the notion of inclusive education for d/hh students in two ways: Inclusion experiences that might allow d/hh children to have a more positive and successful educational experience in general education settings, and how specialized settings for d/hh children may be rethought to be, in their own way, inclusive. The authors believe that while the former reframing may be more in line with current educational practices, the latter is more centered on the linguistic, academic, cultural, and social needs of the d/hh child and may ultimately result in a more accessible and successful educational environment.

The challenges associated with including d/hh students in general education settings would demand a significant amount of capital investment by the government, yet with potentially minimal returns. First, resources would be needed to train and deploy a cadre of educational interpreters to ensure non-d/hh students are able to communicate with their d/hh peers and that d/hh children themselves have full access to the curriculum and classroom discourse. Alongside this, training would have be completed with general education teachers at both the primary and secondary levels to support their use of instructional strategies suitable for d/hh students, such as incorporation of visual supports (Easterbrooks & Stephenson, 2006), opportunities for first language exposure and use of the first language as a tool for learning (Kuntze, Golos, & Enns, 2014; Hoffmeister & Caldwell-Harris, 2014), and systematic and explicit instruction (Cannon et al., 2016; Trussell & Easterbrooks, 2015). Finally, this approach would require access to a qualified teacher of the deaf to support the student and general education teacher to make certain that the student's needs are consistently met. This type of approach would strongly resemble the more common experience in U.S. classrooms serving d/hh children, in which a child is most likely placed in a general education setting (Gallaudet Research Institute, 2010), where they receive itinerant or resource support services to support their learning needs, and dependent upon their language use may communicate via an educational interpreter with their teacher and classmates.

However, given the dramatic differences between the U.S. and other countries, including Jamaica, basing a system of education on this specific external context may not be the best route to success.Even in the case of full implementation of all the above suggestions, there is no guarantee that this approach would be successful in educating d/hh children, nor accepted by the Deaf community in Jamaica. The unique needs and limited resources that are the reality in Jamaica may result in unanticipated challenges or difficulties in adapting and adopting this approach to inclusive education. It may be that even dramatic changes in the current system would fail to adequately meet the linguistic and academic needs of d/hh children in a general education setting due to a lack of resources both material and human.

In addition, there is emerging evidence to suggest that bilingual educational approaches are beneficial for the language and literacy development of many d/hh students (see for instance, Chamberlain & Mayberry, 2000; Hoffmeister, 2000; Padden & Ramsey, 1998; Prinz & Strong, 1998; Scott & Hoffmeister, 2017). As language and literacy skills are foundational for all other learning, it is essential that instructional practices which support this type of development are in place. Though not impossible, faithful implementation of a signed/spoken language bilingual education model is almost unattainable in a general education setting due to issues of personnel, training, language proficiency, and inclusive programs needing a critical mass of d/hh students to make these efforts worthwhile. For this reason, it may be more viable to re-imagine the meaning of inclusion and broaden ways in which educational environments may be considered inclusive.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Inclusion Re-Imagined

Deafness is not only or even primarily a physical disability: Deaf people are also a cultural and linguistic minority group within a hearing society that has its own languages, social norms, histories and ways of being. Therefore to be inclusive of students who are d/hh means not only including considerations for access to the language of instruction (the primary goal of the inclusive practices noted above), but also including models and other representations of deaf language and culture; including deaf artists, writers, entrepreneurs, athletes, clergy, among others. Part of reframing deafness within the local community requires expanding notions of what it means to be deaf beyond the singular auditory impairment to the rich cultural, linguistic, and historical heritage of Deaf communities. As notions of deafness expand, it is also important to consider models of disability beyond the deficit-focused medical model, including a social-relational model of disability and the concept of neurodiversity. Within a social-relational model of disability, systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society (purposeful or not) that position society as the disabling factor rather than the individual or their impairment.

For example, when cities make sidewalks wheelchair accessible, individuals who use wheelchairs can move freely from place to place. When societies do not consider issues of access related to functional limitations or impairments, such decisions have a disabling effect on individuals. Further, within the neurodiversity paradigm (Armstrong, 2010) all individual differences are viewed as having potential benefits, and diversity of experience and ability is viewed as additive and valuable. Thus disability is reframed and re-presented as dis/ability or even just neurodiversity. Recent theoretical models that view deafness through a lens of Deaf-Gain (the inversion of hearing loss) and Deafhood have made progress with this type of framework as applied to d/hh individuals and focus on the benefits of embracing deafness for both the d/hh individual and for society at large (Bauman & Murray, 2014; Ladd, 2003).

Perhaps rather than trying to fit d/hh students into the pre-existing mold of inclusive education, we should enlarge our conception of what ‘inclusion’ means. The authors argue that inclusion must first begin within schools for d/hh students before it is possible to fully address the significant challenges of general education inclusiveness with d/hh students. Inclusion within a self-contained deaf education classroom may refer to including the Deaf community, to including families of d/hh children, and including accessible language and opportunities to meaningfully engage with and use all languages of instruction. These are explored below.

In a deaf education setting, inclusion could refer to the purposeful inclusion of the local Deaf community in the education of d/hh youth. This may mean not only inviting more DCFs and Deaf adults in other roles into the classroom to serve as language models, but also to serve on advisory boards and school committees, or to participate in school and language planning. Deaf adults who have navigated the educational system may have insights into the experience of a d/hh child that would not be known by an all hearing advisory board or teacher's association. It could also include the purposeful training and recruitment of Deaf teachers to work in classrooms with d/hh children, where they serve as an educator, a Deaf role model, and a link to the broader Deaf community (Shantie & Hoffmeister, 2000).

Inclusion could also refer to increasing the ways in which families are included in the education of their d/hh child. In the U.S., parents of d/hh children report the desire for more information regarding hearing loss and how it might impact their child's later development (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016). Though there is no empirical research on the experiences of parents of d/hh children in Jamaica, informal discussions between authors one and two and a group of Jamaican parents of d/hh children suggests a similar desire for knowledge of how to best support their child. Inclusion of families in the education of d/hh children through providing them with access to education and other resources that will help them learn to communicate effectively with their child and ensure that their child is included meaningfully not only in the school environment, but also in their home environments. Because the overwhelming majority of d/hh children are born to hearing parents (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004), it is highly likely that parents of d/hh children will not have prior knowledge of deafness or visual strategies for communication. There is evidence to suggest that having more strategies for use with a d/hh child is associated with lower levels of parental stress (Zaidman-Zait, et al., 2016). Schools who practice inclusion from this perspective would see their charges as not only the d/hh children themselves, but also the families into which these children are born. Educating the significant people in the lives of d/hh children will in turn provide opportunities for growth in the home as well as at school. Because a great deal of learning is done outside of the traditional classroom as a result of incidental exposure to language and ideas (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985), it may be critical to support parents in this way. It may even be possible that such support may move toward changing cultural attitudes about deafness and disability.

Finally, purposeful inclusion of a fully accessible language in the classroom, via a fluent user of that language is necessary for d/hh children to thrive. Language-rich educational settings have been repeatedly identified as necessary for d/hh learners (e.g., Beal-Alvarez, Lederberg, & Easterbrooks, 2012; Mounty, Pucci, & Harmon, 2014). For signing d/hh children, this means an environment that is rich in both JSL and English (via speech and/or print). To attempt to learn and develop in a classroom where access to language is incomplete or perhaps even absent is an impossible task, especially for a child. If inclusive education for d/hh students also meant the inclusion of language-rich environments and specific opportunities to language development that are fully accessible to the d/hh child, this may support the creation of classrooms, both in specialized deaf education settings and in inclusive environments, that are fully accessible to d/hh children. Only once schools for d/hh children are able to consistently offer this type of inclusion between students, families, and the Deaf community do the authors believe that the challenges of inclusion in general education settings can be meaningfully addressed, and d/hh students may develop the foundation of individual, social, and cultural identity that will support them in navigating the hearing world as adults.

The lingering question may be, what are practical steps to be taken towards this re-imagined inclusivity in d/hh education in Jamaica? As noted above, teacher recruitment for d/hh classrooms has been a chronic problem in this country, and an approach to inclusivity that occurs within schools for d/hh students will require a critical mass of trained teachers in order to be successful. The authors offer the following as a potential move toward creating inclusive opportunities for d/hh children and their families within schools for the deaf in Jamaica: Teacher recruitment may best be approached as a combination of both home-grown training, which has been identified as a deep need especially in bilingual education (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Valenzuela, 2016), and international partnerships.

Within the schools for the deaf in Jamaica now, a number of DCFs exist to support the language and cultural communication of hearing teachers. To train DCFs to work as classroom teachers themselves will provide Deaf adults with employment opportunities as well as d/hh children with teachers who are fluent in their language and embedded within their culture. Training DCFs as teachers may also be a beacon to parents and even d/hh children themselves, who may for the first time see a Deaf adult employed in a professional capacity. For hearing teachers who are already on the job in other areas of education who are interested in working with d/hh children, perhaps a rigorous on-the-job training program to support their transition could be another means of recruiting teachers. As momentum grows, pilot school programs could be started that provide hearing children and teens with the opportunity to learn and become fluent in JSL starting at earlier ages. This could in turn serve as another pipeline for qualified and linguistically fluent teachers and interpreters.

Alongside these home grown options, international partnerships may provide some temporary and some longer term solutions. Universities in the U.S. that offer deaf education and related programs may be able to provide ongoing training and support for teachers and DCFs as they navigate the acquisition of pedagogical knowledge necessary to teach d/hh children. U.S. based teacher training programs may also consider study abroad opportunities for their teacher candidates to come to Jamaica to gain experience working with d/hh children and their families. Such partnerships may provide short-term training and collaboration opportunities that benefit both countries, and have the potential to develop into long-lasting programs that could have lasting impacts on the education of d/hh children.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Issues related to inclusive education are understudied within the d/hh student population. As education trends towards a preference for inclusion for students with disabilities, researchers must explore what an inclusive education means for d/hh children and whether and how such an environment can be linguistic and culturally supportive, especially for d/hh children who communicate through sign language. In addition, it is necessary to understand the ultimate impact on academic and post-school outcomes that traditional inclusive education may have on d/hh students - not only those who communicate through speaking and listening, but also those who communicate primarily through a signed language. Globally, increased attention to these issues in local contexts should support the development of d/hh children.

However, the authors believe that in addition to the above line of research, it is also necessary to understand how environments that have traditionally been conceptualized as more restrictive may in fact have the potential to provide greater access to language, peers, and academic development for certain subgroups of children with disabilities. Viability of a model of inclusive education that examines academic and social inclusiveness within a d/hh classroom environment, rather than removing d/hh children from this environment for the sake of physical inclusivity, should be explored. The question of whether there are specific features of a d/hh friendly environment that are uniquely supportive of development, or the impact that including families or Deaf adults may play for this population, should be more systematically researched.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, inclusive education has focused to the exclusion of all else on bringing student with disabilities into the general education setting. Though this may be a successful approach for some, it is not necessarily appropriate for all students. This may be especially true of d/hh students, particularly those who communicate using a natural signed language and identify with Deaf culture. By expanding and reconsidering what it means to be inclusive in education, we can reframe the very notion of disability as static and internal. When the primary goals of instructional interactions focus on supporting identity building and language development in the service of learning, perceived deficits are minimized and replaced by evidence of potential. For d/hh students, this may mean building upon their cultural and linguistic assets in the service of developing other academic skills.

Internationally, perhaps particularly within under-resourced countries, this reframing towards potentiality may open up opportunities for d/hh students that may have previously gone unrecognized. When the notion of inclusion is reversed to consider ways in which a linguistically accessible learning environment for d/hh childen may be inclusive of language development opportunities, of Deaf community stakeholders, of Deaf role models, and of families, the re-centering of education around the particular language and communication needs of the child may result in stronger outcomes. The authors believe that this broader notion of inclusion may result in greater opportunities for all children.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Bilingual/Bicultural Deaf Education: An approach to teaching d/hh children that promotes bilingualism (the national signed language as the first language and the national spoken/written language as the second language) and biculturalism (understanding and fluency in both Deaf culture and hearing mainstream culture).

Deaf Culture: The notion that Deaf people who use a signed language are members of a cultural minority group with norms and traditions.

Educational Interpreter: A position in an inclusive education setting with a signing d/hh child which supports communication and language access by providing signed language interpretations of spoken classroom discussion, and allowing the d/hh child to participate by translating their signed responses into spoken language.

Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf: A teacher who travels between schools that have small numbers of d/hh students in inclusive settings to both provide support for the general education teacher as well as direct instructional services to the d/hh students.

Medical Model of Deafness: The perspective on deafness that prioritizing restoration of hearing and approaches to teaching and learning that use speech, speech-reading, residual hearing, and/or hearing amplification.

Natural Language: A language that develops naturally through exposure in the earliest years of life. For many deaf children, a signed language is considered a more ‘natural’ language due to the ease with which it can be acquired.

Self-Contained Deaf Education Classroom: A K-12 educational setting wherein d/hh children remain in a specialized classroom that is frequently located within a larger public school with hearing children with d/hh peers and a teacher of the deaf for the majority of the day.